

Lanka Link

Summer

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2023



## Hill Country widows enjoy fellowship and ministry in Trincomalee

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## From the Chairman's pen...

July 2023

Dear Supporting Friends

Welcome to the latest issue of Lanka Link. I hope you find the various articles and reports encouraging and of assistance in your prayers. How we need our gracious God's indispensable help in this vital work. May there be much here for which you will want to give thanks and much to bring before the Throne of Grace.

Please do not hesitate to contact Gary Donaldson if you would like a visit and an illustrated presentation of the work.

Following advice from the Charity Commission for England and Wales, we need to appoint more trustees. If you might be able to help us with this, please do not hesitate to let us know. Thank you.

Sadly, accusations continue to be made against us and those whom we seek to support. If at any time you are troubled by any allegation that comes to your notice, please do not hesitate to contact me. In 1 Corinthians 16:9 Paul states 'that there are many adversaries'. Brethren, pray for us.

May the Lord be with you and bless you as you serve Him in these difficult days.

Sincerely

Pastor Richard Clarke

Chairman of Care Sri Lanka

Contact: raclarkefca@hotmail.com

## Baptisms



Despite much hardship and opposition, churches in Sri Lanka are experiencing growth. Several people from Neenakeany were baptized in January. In July, 6 people from Vaddavan church were baptized, 16 from Kattumuriippu and 4 from Thampalagamam. Please pray for them, that they may grow in grace and in the knowledge of Jesus Christ their Saviour.



# Pastor Jeyakanth's News

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Greetings in the precious Name of our Lord Jesus Christ!

*'And thou, son of man, be not afraid of them, neither be afraid of their words, though briars and thorns be with thee, and thou dost dwell among scorpions. Be not afraid of their words, nor be dismayed at their looks, though they be a rebellious house. And thou shalt speak my words unto them, whether they will hear or whether they will forbear...'* (Ezekiel 2: 6-7)

We thank God for His faithfulness and gracious guidance in our life and ministry. We can see His blessings.

At the time of writing, we are still in Sri Lanka. We would appreciate your continued prayers for all the churches under the LEFC umbrella. We can see that God is doing things to overcome the disturbances that have afflicted us, because He is just. So, the truth is winning. The people who are against us are still trying to discourage and disgrace us. We thank God that the Lord is with us.

*'But reject profane and old wives' fables and exercise yourself toward godliness.'* (1 Timothy 4:7)

We really thank God for the godly men who have been with us, encouraged us, and prayerfully given counsel, especially Pastor Poh, Pastor John Hall, the members of the Council of Reference and Care Sri Lanka and other brothers. We thank everyone who supported us in any way.

It is very sad that enemies have no understanding of the precious value of time, wasting their precious time and our precious time. The local church needs to look after their own local church matters, not the matters of other churches. Those who criticized us and unnecessarily interfered in our ministry, ought to examine their own lives and achievements. However, as we continually look unto the Lord and depend upon HIM, we have focused on God's blessings rather than the enemies' attacks.

In Sri Lanka, the economic crisis has been gradually stabilizing. Inflation is coming down and fuel is becoming more readily available. We can get fuel under a QR system. Medicines are still in short supply in many hospitals and pharmacies. According to the news, in 2022, 300,000 people left the country. As many of those were health professionals, some hospitals are struggling with staff shortages.

Many farmers were unable to cultivate the land for two years. Now we can see healthy paddy fields in some areas which gives us joy.

Over the last 6 weeks we have seen Hindus celebrating many religious events one after another. Most of the Hindu temples are packed with devotees. We have really had a burden to pray for their souls.

Another change we can see in the lifestyle of Tamils and Muslims is that they have started to go on outings. Before COVID, it was usually the Sinhalese who took excursions and enjoyed going out with their families. Most Tamils like to save money while Muslims like to stay at home, but now we see so many families are on the road. In Trincomalee where we live, it always seems busy with tourists!

I would like to highlight some things to praise and thank God for:

- In Thampalagamam Church, by God's grace the believers are now settled. Last week the attendance was 177, including 52 children. 'Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies' (Psalm 23:5)
- Thank God for the new ministry among the Veddas-Hunters and God's dealing in their hearts. When we brought them to Trincomalee and made them happy with hospitality and care, especially with sharing the Word of God, some of their hearts changed to seek the love of Christ.
- Thank God for the unforgettable, joyful experiences that our widows had. They marveled to see God's wonderful creation outside of their own villages.
- Thank God for the new pastors and evangelists who have joined our Pastors' Fellowship. In churches as well we have seen newcomers. Thank God for this.
- Thank God for the growth in the ministry among the Sinhalese community.
- What a joy it has been to see so many baptisms!
- There is a great need to conduct medical camps and eye clinics. As medicines are in short supply and expensive, believers in the village churches and the poor are suffering. Please pray for any medical team who receives God's calling to serve this needy people.

Thank you very much again for all your support and prayers.  
Every blessing,

Jeyakanth



Pastor Jeyakanth with the elders and members of Thampalagamam Church

# Ministry Trip

Part 1 continued...

January 2023

Part 1

*The following edited report was originally compiled by Brother Anojithan*

**23.01.2023** Pastor Jeyakanth, Brother Gary, Brother Isaiah, members of the office staff, (Sister Pushparani, Sister Celine, and Brother Anojithan) set off from Trincomalee towards the Northern Province to meet with the workers, visit their churches and to encourage them in their ministry.

## **VELANKULAM IN KOVIL MOTTAI**

At 8.30 a.m. in the morning, we arrived to see the LEFC ministry led by Brother Sithiran in Kovil Mottai area, Velankulam at Vavuniya. The specific ministry area is a village 7km away from Poovarasankulam in Vavuniya district. It was clear that there were no transport facilities from the main road into the village and most of the people must walk everywhere to carry out their daily activities. Some church members walk 4 miles to get to church.

Sister Pushparani was shown the project activities carried out by LEFC and saw the well-tended garden where papaya, banana, tomato, bottle gourd, radish, chillies etc. were being grown, and the well which was constructed for cultivation purposes. Their fields were dry due to lack of rain.



We were served morning breakfast by Brother Sithiran's family. We gave thanks then ate the food which they had prepared for us with care and love. We ate papaya and bananas which had been grown in Brother Sithiran's garden. He arranged for a small prayer meeting, which was attended by about 20 believers, who were also given breakfast and fruits. Brother Sithiran started the prayer time with a song. Brother Gary was invited to give a message and he spoke from Psalm 17:8 'under the wings of the Almighty'. Pastor Jeyakanth ended the service with prayer.



Two of the believers spoke to Pastor Jeyakanth and gave their requests. Two widows discussed their situation with Sister Celine. Brother Anojithan and Brother Gary spoke with Diluxshika and Suthakaran, two sponsor children, to discuss their needs. Diluxshika's father died suddenly in 2022, in a collision with a military vehicle while riding his bicycle. Their mother is taking care of them. Our next destination was a short 15-minute drive away.

## **KANATI GANESAPURAM VILLAGE**

Kanati Ganesapuram village is at Chettikulam. There are 320 families in this area. The village was heavily affected by the war. People lost their homes, and all their belongings. Although several years have passed since the war ended, the scars remain. The people of this village who migrated to India have resettled here. The government has provided houses for them, but they live without any basic amenities.

In 2018, a lady from this village, called Santhi, went to the hospital at Poovarasankulam where she met Brother Sithiran who introduced her to the gospel. She shared the gospel with many other people in her village. One family invited Brother Sithiran to meet them. He came

## Part 1 continued...

to their home to share the gospel, and that is how the ministry started there. During the pandemic, Brother Sithiran continued to visit them and shared the Word of God. Brother Subramaniam also supported Brother Sithiran by visiting them whenever he came to the area. Currently, about 12 families attend the church.



A small prayer meeting was conducted here with 7 adults and 4 children taking part. It began with prayer and after singing a song together, Brother Gary shared the Word of God from Luke 15: There is joy in heaven when a sinner repents. Pastor Jeyakanth spent time discussing with them their present financial condition. The people of this area are day labourers. They are greatly affected by the financial crisis and the high price of basic commodities. Moreover, the yields of their crops dropped due to the non-availability of artificial fertilizer and agricultural chemicals for the crops, because of government policy. They shared this with Pastor with a great burden in their heart. Please pray for the ministry at Ganesapuram. Brother Sithiran accompanied us on our journey up to Mannar.

*Continued on page 14*

## Combined outing for Widows and members of the Veddah community

**Pastor Jeyakanth reports on the outings enjoyed by many as they shared fellowship and experienced the blessings of God's creation.**

On Saturday 10th June, the LEFC bus travelled to Hatton to pick up the widows from the Hill Country. Never had these ladies been outside their tea estates, nor had they ever seen the ocean before. To coincide with this trip for the widows, we planned to hold a 2-day outing for the members of 6 Mile Post Church to visit the Hill Country. Many were happy to come, including Kaliyamma, Ranjani and Rani who have been working as helpers in 6 Mile Post for more than

15 years. After seeing all the beauty of nature and God's wonderful creation they praised and thanked God for being given the chance to experience that different environment.

On Sunday, after the morning service at Meddakumbra we met with the church members to find out their situations. Afterwards, a group of widows from the Hill Country joined us to leave their tea plantation and come back to Trincomalee. Our plan was to





show them the seaside, the villages, have fellowship with other believers, and meet with other widows from the Eastern province. Many of the Hill Country widows were longing to have their first taste of such an adventure, but some of them lacked the courage, confidence, or sufficiently good health for making such a long trip. So, only 15 widows made the journey. Those who came were delighted with all that they saw on the way.

That same Sunday, early in the morning, our Children's Home small bus plus another vehicle picked up 47 people from the jungle area of Mahiyangana. Around one third of them are believers, shepherded by Pastor Asoka. When Pastor Asoka invited people to this study programme, many unbelievers wanted to come and join with the believers. All of them were

first brought to Wallaichennai Church, where the morning service was held. Pastor Asoka and Brother Leslie shared messages. Then they were driven to Komathalamadu church. On the way they saw the lagoons, ponds, different trees, and various things they had not seen before. After lunch, Pastor Kugarasa shared his testimony from the Word of God. By evening, they reached 6 Mile Post, where they had a good dinner and sleep.

The next day, other widows from Kekirawa, Verugal, Poonagar, Muthur, and Palaiyoothu also joined with them, making 52 widows altogether. We had a combined prayer meeting and Bible study for the widows and the group from Mahiyangana. Afterwards, they went on an outing to see the hot wells, the harbour view and Trincomalee town area. Those who stayed behind were

gathered in 6 Mile Post, where Vani and Sister Celin encouraged them from the Word of God and asked some of the ladies to share their testimonies. When everyone had returned, they had some games and a good lunch.

In the afternoon, there was time for a rest, then the word of God was shared once more before some gifts and clothing from the UK were distributed to everyone. The widows went back home, apart from those from the Hill Country, who went to the beach in the evening with Vani and Sister Celin. They were very emotional with the thrill of it all. They cried with joy to see God's wonderful creation. Vani told me that they hugged them repeatedly to express their joy. Some of them collected sea water and sand to take back home. It was really an unforgettable day for them.

On Tuesday, our bus took them back to Hatton. After breakfast, morning prayer and devotions, they left Trincomalee taking packed lunches with them. On the way home they stopped to visit the botanical garden in Kandy which they

all enjoyed. They were nearly at Hatton, when the driver had to brake suddenly, causing 87-year-old Mary to fall over in the bus. She was having breathing difficulties, so was admitted to hospital. Everyone prayed earnestly and called upon the Lord for His help. God alone granted recovery, and everyone reached home safely. She was the very lady who had told Sister Celin on Trincomalee beach that, "Twenty-five years ago God saved me from a bad accident. His plan was for me to know the Saviour and experience His love, now I am ready to go to heaven when God calls me. I am not sure whether I will see you all again or not."

We really thank God for all His mercies! Likewise, the group from Mahiyangana also conveyed their thanks for the blessings they received from this programme. Pastor Asoka said that they were very thankful to LEFC. What is more, he said that four non-believers who came with them were touched by the Word of God. They shared this with him. All glory be to the Lord!

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## Care Sri Lanka



*Supporting vulnerable women and widows*

*Thank you to all those who have responded to the need of vulnerable women and widows that Care Sri Lanka seeks to support. Your donations of a regular monthly amount to the programme and your regular prayer have been a great encouragement to them. If you would like to know more about this, please do not hesitate to get in touch.*

Contact: [becky@care-srilanka.org](mailto:becky@care-srilanka.org)

## Visalatchi from Kottakala Church expresses her thanks

*I am a widow and to this day my children are not taking care of me. I live alone. I do cleaning and manage to get food to eat and lead my life with tears and agony. I'm living only with the courage that my God is with me. As such, I thank Him for the meeting at Trincomalee and for this wonderful opportunity to see the surrounding places. I was delighted to see the unimaginable Trincomalee, Kandy, and Peradeniya Royal Botanical Gardens. After two days of delicious food, games, words of scripture, warm hospitality, and sharing my heartaches, I felt like the burden of my mind was reduced. I really thank God for this opportunity which I never dreamed of. Thank you everyone for the delicious food and all your care. I would like to express my gratitude to the leaders who organized this.*

## S Letchumi from High Forest Church was blessed by her June visit to Trincomalee

*It is 25 years since I lost my husband and had to face my future with two children in very challenging circumstances. My children were 2 and 5 years old when my husband died. The cost of educating the children was very difficult for me. I provided for my children by working in the vegetable garden and working overtime in the tea estate. This is how my two children grew up. My eldest son was a cripple, unable to walk and had no function in his legs. It was very hard to take care of him. I was in tears daily with the thought that no one could help me in this regard. One day the servant of God came to my home and told me about Jesus, prayed for me and asked me to accept the Lord. I went to the worship services regularly. I saw changes in my son. God helped him to get up and walk. I'm taking care of him like a little child even today. I was in pain and tears in my heart, but the tour organized by the church brought great comfort and joy for me. I could see many different scenes, lovely flowers and trees, the wonderful seaside, everything stirred my heart with joy. I would like to thank my God, who made all this in our country. I would like to thank our Pastor for bringing me an unimaginable distance to see the wonderful places in Trincomalee, to hear the wonderful words of the Lord, to eat good food every mealtime, and for loving care. It is the first time we had ever seen the sea, how wonderful it was! Thank you to everyone who took care of us. Thank you!*



## NEWS...Brother Morayas writes from Valaithoddam Church



Valaithoddam is one of 9 villages in Verugal district. Home gardens, agriculture and fishing are the main occupations of the people living here. Many who

lived on the coast were resettled in this village after the 2004 tsunami. The surroundings are full of natural beauty, with the sea, salt flats, forests, coconut, and palm trees, while many lives are blighted by the consequences of drunkenness, child marriages, idolatry and dropping out of school.

Since the gospel has been shared in this village, fifteen families have come to faith in Christ. Currently, eighteen Sunday school children and twenty adults meet for worship in a believer's home, but they would dearly love to have a church building in which to gather. In April, four new believers were added to their number. One of them, Nalinam, had lost the use of his legs in an accident, but has now, together with his wife and daughter, put his trust in the Saviour. Do please pray for them, as they struggle without a proper income.

Many of the children who come to church are malnourished and benefit

from a nutritious meal every Sunday, prepared by believers. Throughout the week, there is a regular ministry of visitation and prayer. On Fridays, five ladies carry out visitation to other ladies to pray with them.

The workers found the teaching from the monthly study programme organised by LEFC very useful, especially the sessions on Sunday school work, and made changes to the way they conducted the Sunday school at Valaithoddam.

- Pray that faith may be strengthened as many are fearful in these difficult times.
- Please pray for God's gracious support for Nalinam and his family.
- Pray for the need of a church building.
- Pray for the poor families who benefit from support with fishing, home gardens and animal husbandry.

## January 2023

## Part 2

### **MANNAR CHURCH**

Brother Pragasam is responsible for the ministry at Mannar church and works with Brother Sundaram. Since 9am they had been praying with the believers from Adampan, 18 adults and 6 children. They were served with morning breakfast. We joined with them, and Brother Gary shared the Word of God.

There were discussions about holding communion. The believers shared their many difficulties; those from Adampan especially struggled with transport and getting to the church, due to lack of daily wage jobs and increased bus fares. They asked if it was possible to hold an evening service at Adampan. Because there was nowhere to meet, Pastor told them to look for somewhere to rent and urged them to seek the Lord and have fellowship together.

### **NACHCHIKUDDA**

Brother Murugesh is responsible for the ministry here. Sunday worship service, fasting and prayer, Bible study and Sunday school are the ministry activities of this church. They also hold evening tuition classes for 42 students, with 2 teachers. It was raining heavily when we arrived. 12 adults and 6 children met for worship. Brother Murugesh led the service and Brother Gary opened the Scriptures. Three of the believers discussed their problems with Pastor Jeyakanth. One sister is bringing up her two sons on a very small income since her husband left her. Pastor consoled her that she would be supported by the church, and he gave instructions to Brother Anojithan to add the two boys to the sponsorship programme. Brother Gary and Anojithan also met with Jonathan, a sponsor child, and enquired about his health and his progress at school. Jonathan's mother expressed her gratitude for the educational and medical support he received.

Pastor had discussions with the believers. The main occupation of the people of Nachchikuddah is fishing, but due to the scarcity of fuel in the country, it is very difficult for them to make a living from fishing at the present time. They shared their many worries. Pastor said that while LEFC continued to receive funds, then they would continue to

receive the support they needed.

### **DISCUSSIONS WITH THE BELIEVERS OF NACHCHIKUDDA CHURCH**

Brother Kumar said that the money they receive does not cover the needs of the ministry, so Sister Pushparani was instructed to arrange to make up the shortfall. The believers said that it is 25 years since the Nachchikuddah church was first established. They expressed their wish to celebrate this special anniversary and had set aside some savings (30,000 Sri Lankan rupees, or £75) for this purpose. They asked Pastor Jeyakanth to lead it and he said LEFC would help to organise it. Since it is the rainy season now, it would be better to hold it in June.

Then we travelled to Rasavin Thottam at Jaffna, arriving at 8.30 pm. We had our evening meal and the day's work was over. God was with us on our trip and led us. Glory to God!

### **JAFFNA 24.01.2023**

The following morning, we held a prayer meeting. We prayed for the ministries in the Northern Province, for all the workers there and for all the LEFC ministries. We especially remembered Brother Alagendran's wife who was sick. Brother Gary, Pastor Jeyakanth, the workers (Alagendran, Sithiran, Anton Ramesh, Murugesh, and Joel) and Isaiah, participated in this meeting. Afterwards, there were discussions about the Jaffna ministries, in which it was decided that Brother Alagendran and Anton Ramesh would carry out the ministry in the Northern Province, and Brother Joel would be supporting them. After breakfast, Pastor inspected the ministry home and discussed the proposed alterations needed for the building. Then we set off for Achchelu.

We visited Brother Achchuthan, who lost the use of his legs during the war. Pastor asked whether the workers came to visit him. He said that Brother Alagendran and Anton Ramesh used to visit him and pray with him. Then we enquired about his family situation. Care Sri Lanka had set up a small roadside shop to give him an income. When the business had been going well, his wife had been by his side, but as business declined during Covid, his wife had left him, and he was currently living with his parents. Care Sri Lanka had constructed bathroom facilities with a ramp for him. We had also provided the

facility to rear cattle, which was maintained by Achchuthan's father but since he had become sick, Achchuthan said that they had sold the cattle. We spoke to him about the repair of his wheelchair, and he requested that a motor should be attached to it. Pastor encouraged him to participate in the church worship service. Then Brother Gary prayed for him and his family. Afterwards, we went with Achchuthan to view his small shop.

We went to visit the new ministry carried out by Brother Anton Ramesh at Neerveli. In the home where he conducts a prayer meeting, we met two families. They have recently started coming to church. Two sisters, Luxshi and Kavitha live together with their children, next door to their father, who is unwell with cancer. We talked with him and shared the gospel. We learned that Luxshi's husband had left her 5 years previously. Pastor counselled them. Their home was heavily damaged during the war, and they couldn't afford to repair it. Brother Isaiah prayed for this family. Please pray for them.



**A report from 6 Mile Post on the children's outing held on June 2nd this year, bringing children together from churches in Verugal district, Muthur district, Palaiyoothu and 6 Mile Post.**

*'Train up a child in the way he should go.'* (Proverbs 22:6)

Teaching children Biblical principles is a challenging task for families and churches, but it is a duty and joy to lead them to a knowledge of God and His ways. Children should be told from the Scriptures about the wonderful things that God has done. They should be taught the fear of God and remember that they are a heritage from the Lord. The Lord Jesus Christ said, *'Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God.'* (Mark 10:14) Let's raise children in Christ. Let's create a prosperous future for children.



The Lanka Evangelical Fellowship of Churches has for many years been taking seriously the call to minister to children. The one-day event arranged by 6 Mile Post Church gathered children from Vaddavan, Muttichennai, Poonagar, 6 Mile Post, Kallady, Palaiyoothu, Veeramanagar, Neenakeany and Sandanawatte.

In the morning, a bus picked up the children and their Sunday school teachers from various places, and breakfast that had been prepared earlier was distributed on the bus. Altogether 120 children took part in the event at 6 Mile Post. Children from each church came forward and sang Sunday school

# CHILDREN'S ONE-DAY EVENT

songs. Then the students were split into 4 groups, named after the gospel writers, to do their planned activities, and a leader appointed for each group.



They enjoyed bible lessons, games, (filling the water bucket, small fish-big fish, musical chairs), bible quizzes, a general knowledge quiz and a song competition. They were also provided with good food, some clothing and stationery items.



# CHILDREN'S ONE-DAY EVENT



All the children joined in everything with enthusiasm. They had snacks and cold drinks and later they were served with lunch, ice cream and fruits.

Everyone came back together for a prizegiving for the winners of the activities, then clothes from abroad were distributed to all the children, as well as pens and pencils for school. They received everything with great joy and, by God's grace and under Pastor's guidance, the day was a success.



We took the children to visit the Kanniya hot springs and to the Navy fort at Trincomalee, two famous historical places which appear in children's textbooks. Most parents would find it impossible to afford to take them on such an outing. This day conducted by the church was a great blessing and encouragement to the children. They were also taught about child protection. Finally, everyone was taken back to their homes after a wonderful day out together.

# Ministry Trip

Part 3 continued...

January 2023

Part 3

## MULLAITIVU - VISHVAMADU

After lunch, Brother Gary led the prayer meeting held at Vishvamadu church, prior to a discussion with the Northern Province workers who gave an update of their ministries. Present at the meeting were: Brother Gary, Pastor Jeyakanth, Alagendran, Yogarasa, Murugesu, Pragasam, Suman, Sithiran, Joel, Sundaram, Manoharan, Mukunthan, Anton Ramesh, Sister Malini, Sister Pushparani, Sister Celine, and Brother Anojithan.



Administration matters were discussed as well as many pastoral issues. At the end of a lively and frank discussion, Brother Gary put forward this statement to the workers: It has been reported to me from abroad that you are working in fear of Pastor Jeyakanth and asked them whether it was true. At this, all the workers laughed. They said that this was a stupid question. They respect his position, according to their culture and it was nonsense to call it fear. They unanimously expressed the opinion that this is God's ministry and there is no need to fear anyone; God has appointed Pastor Jeyakanth as overseer and so it is the responsibility of all of us to give him due respect.

Brother Gary asked another question: How many years do you think that churches from abroad should continue to support you? This was impossible to answer. Our country was affected by the civil war for 33 and a half years. Then we were hit by the devastating tsunami, floods, and droughts. The country's financial situation was adversely affected more and more. Now that we have the aftereffects of coronavirus and the scarcity of artificial fertilizer, we can see no way to recover. The people are experiencing huge difficulties due to the sudden changes in the financial and political situation of the country. Prices of basic commodities are rising day by day. Sister Malini said that anyone who thinks they can be independent of foreign support is a liar! Everyone unanimously agreed that they needed to go on receiving help from abroad.

## KALLAPADU

Brother Yogarasa came with us to Kallapadu church. Brother Suman had organized a small prayer meeting with the believers. This church is on the beach. As it was now evening time, the sea was so beautiful with the waves striking the shore. Brother Gary shared the Word of God. Then Pastor met the believers and had discussions with them, especially one sister's son, who had been set free from drug addiction and had come to the prayer meeting. Brother Suman discussed with Pastor regarding his wife's health condition which has worsened. The people of Kallapadu rely on fishing to earn their living. The fuel shortages had made life so difficult, and the people expressed their gratitude for all the support that LEFC continues to give them. We could see that the church premises were beautifully maintained. Coconut trees had been planted and fenced around for protection. After drinking tea together, we bid farewell to the believers and started our journey back to Trincomalee, where we arrived at 10.30 pm.

## THAMPALAGAMAM 26.01.2023

At 8.30 am we started our ministry trip to Batticaloa from Pastor's house. Pastor and the office staff were invited to attend a creative exhibition by the children in two of the preschools at Thampalagamam which were sponsored by Care Sri Lanka.





The children, teachers and parents at Kalaimahal Preschool greeted us enthusiastically. Their creations were beautifully displayed, and the children explained in their own words what they had made with their parents' help. We enjoyed their songs and stories. Pastor Jeyakanth was happy to meet the former principal of the school, Sister Thillainathan, who was very supportive of the Thampalagamam ministry in the early years. Then we met a person who had caused many problems and opposed Pastor Jeyakanth's ministry in the early years. We have been supporting the preschool for more than 10 years.

After Pastor prayed, we left to make our way to Parasakthi Preschool, where we saw another exhibition of the children's work. The school principal, the district development officer, and the children and women's development officer were present. On the way to Batticaloa, we visited Poonagar church and after inspecting the damage in the church building, Brother Kalidasan was given suggestions for repairs.

**KOMATHALAMADU**

Brother Kugarasa was unwell. We asked about arranging a meeting with the believers during the evening on the way back from our other ministry visit but he said the believers would have problems getting transport during the evening. We spoke with Arunraj, a sponsor child. Then

Brother Kugarasa shared the present situation of the church believers, how due to scarcity of fertilizer the farmers are facing losses and the widows are also finding it difficult to fulfill their daily requirements. If anyone goes to hospital for treatment, there is a shortage of medicines, and the believers are forced to buy them from the pharmacy. Since his church believers come from far off places, he needs a vehicle to pick them up and at the same time he wanted us to pray for the need of a motorcycle for home visitation.



**WALLAICHENNAI**

At Wallaichennai, Brother Mahendran and Brother Jeyaram organized a prayer meeting, which was led by Brother Lesley. Pastor Jeyakanth and Brother Gary were encouraged to see that the church had grown. There were 34 adults and 12 children. Brother Gary spoke on Psalm 8 and Pastor Jeyakanth conducted a

Bible study from Genesis 1. Everyone enjoyed tea and biscuits, while sweets, pencils and notebooks were distributed amongst the children, who received them happily. The believers shared their needs with Pastor Jeyakanth, then we travelled to Batticaloa where we spent the night.



**WALLATAPITTI 27.01.2023**

In the morning, before breakfast, we all spent time together in fellowship and prayer with Brothers Lesley, Mahendran, Jeyaram and Arul. We prayed for all the ministry works in the Eastern Province and for the workers. Before we set off, it suddenly started raining. While we were travelling, the rain became much heavier, and the streets were flooded with water, but by God's grace we were happy to arrive safely at Wallatapitti. Brother Vijayendran organized a prayer meeting where Brother Gary shared the Word of God from Psalm 42. We talked with a sponsor child and heard about the believers' needs. They explained to Pastor that agriculture is affected by the lack of fertilizer and damage caused by wild elephants is also on the increase.

*Continued on page 26*

## NEWS...Brother Jayanthan reports on the current situation in Vaddavan

There are 212 families in total who live in Vaddavan. They make their living in small-scale animal husbandry, agricultural work, and growing rice during the rainy season.

This past year, the rice harvest incurred heavy losses due to the political turmoil in our country. The unprecedented rise in the price of essential commodities caused a lot of hardship for the farmers. The increase in the price of fuel, the lack of diesel available for tractors, and the shortage of fertilizer caused the farmers to suffer greatly, and they did not get the results they would usually expect.

There are three Hindu temples in Vaddavan for different gods, registered by the government and supported by the villagers. There are 72 Christian families, who attend the Methodist Church, our church, and another denomination.

The village has a primary school for students from grades 1-5 and a pre-school. There is a shortage of teachers here.

### **Church news**

The church had a humble beginning, with just four families starting to meet in 2010. Currently we have 30 families attending the worship services. There are 35 adults and 22 children. The Lord is doing great things. There are now

30 baptized members of this Church. We hold two services on Sunday and Sunday school starts at 7.30, before the morning service. Saturday morning, we have fasting and prayer and in the evening around 15 – 17 children attend the Bible study and receive a nutritious meal. The women meet for prayer on Tuesday and the men meet for prayer and Bible study on Thursday.



### **Present state of believers' families**

The believers come regularly for worship, fasting, prayer and Bible study. Due to the current economic hardships and inflation in the country, failure in the harvest and drought, people are struggling to meet their need for daily food. If this situation persists, the believers may become spiritually discouraged.

### **Sunday school**

By the grace of God, we hold a Sunday School in Vaddavan Church each week and 13 children attend. M. Priya teaches the children songs, stories, and memory verses. The children take part enthusiastically and glorify the Lord's name. The children

especially love to learn new songs with actions.

When the children have a birthday, we pray for them and sing Happy Birthday which they enjoy. When they are split into two groups and asked questions about the Sunday school lesson, they love to take part.

We are praying for the children's needs. At present, they are having a lot of difficulty getting to school during this drought and extreme heat. As the schools are a distance away, the children must walk under the burning sun to get there and are suffering from the high temperatures. The children's education is being affected. God is protecting the children and we are thankful for His mercies.

### **Our Prayer Needs**

- We have no permanent house for the pastor. Pray to God to provide a permanent house.
- Pray for self-employment incentives to be granted to the widows who are in the church.
- Pray to God that we might get water and electricity connection for the church building.
- Please pray for the children's spiritual growth and for their education.
- Pray for Jessica and Jesmica, the children from our church about to take exams.
- Pray for our Sunday school teacher, M. Priya.

My name is Priya. I am 26 and I am married to Nidarshan. I was brought up as a Hindu. Since my childhood. I had to go through difficulties and lived a poor life. My father was a heavy drinker and he used to fight frequently and create problems in the family. Due to this, my family was poor, so my mother went to a Middle Eastern country to work as a maid. At the age of 14, I was admitted to the Children's Home at 6 Mile Post and got my education. After completing primary and higher grades, I worked as a pre-school teacher at 6 Mile Post. Later, I worked as an assistant teacher in my village school. Now I work in my church as a Sunday school teacher.

During my days in the Children's Home, I came to know the truth and in 2018 I accepted the Lord Jesus Christ as my personal Saviour and was baptized.

In 2021, I got married to an unbeliever. I am constantly praying for my husband to repent. My husband is addicted to alcohol which causes many problems. Please pray for my husband to repent. Even so, God is leading me wonderfully. I believe that God will turn my sorrow into joy. I believe that the God who has guided me this far, is able to lead me further. I give thanks to God.

*Glory be to the name of the Lord.*

# Ministry Trip

Part 4 continued...

January 2023

Part 4

**28.01.2023** We started our trip from Third Mile Post. Brother Gary, Pastor Jeyakanth, Brother Isaiah, Sister Pushparani, Sister Celine, and Brother Anojithan were joined by Brother Fernando. Our first stop was Thampalagamam because a widow called Theivanai had died. She had been a regular member of Thampalagamam Church for the past 30 years and had only been baptized 7 years previously. Pastor went to her home and conducted a prayer service and shared the Word of God from John 14. Theivanai's son was so thankful to Pastor Jeyakanth for having come to his mother's funeral house during his busy schedule.

## **KEKIRAWA - THIRAPPANAI AREA TO VISIT SINHALA MINISTRY**

We went to visit Brother Samarakoon's ministry at Kekirawa and Thirappanai. Brother Samarakoon joined us from Ganewelpola on our journey to Thirappanai, situated nearly 20 km away from the town of Kekirawa. The place where Brother Samarakoon was doing ministry was in a remote area and the terrible track to get there went between paddy fields and a lake. A prayer meeting was arranged at Thirappanai, attended by many believers. Brother Samarakoon started the prayer meeting with a song and Brother Gary shared the Word of God.



The believers spoke fluently in Sinhala and Tamil. Pastor had discussions with them. They earn their living by daily wage work and fishing in the ponds. Even though they have grown crops, they told us that the yield was unsatisfactory due to lack of fertilizer, and elephants were destroying the crops and their houses. Mostly their homes are constructed out of clay. We spent time with the Sunday school children. After this, we continued our journey to Kekirawa. On the way we met Brother Adams and his wife from Thirappanai, who are doing ministry along with Brother Samarakoon.

## **KEKIRAWA**

At Kekirawa, afternoon lunch was prepared at Samarakoon's house. Then a prayer meeting was arranged. Samarakoon started the prayer with a song. Brother Gary shared the Word of God. Pastor Jeyakanth shared with the believers about the relationship between him and Samarakoon and ended with prayer. After this, we talked with 4 sponsor children and took photographs. Pastor had discussions with the believers.

## **KURUNEGALA PROVINCE**

We reached Brother Mahinda's church at about 8.30pm. There was a power cut when we arrived, but the family of Brother Mahinda invited us in happily with a battery powered lamp, because they didn't have any kerosene. We slept there that night.



**29.01.2023.** A Bible study class had been organized at Kurunegala church from 8.00am to 9.00am. Pastor Jeyakanth taught the Bible study from Genesis chapter 1.

Sunday worship was from 9.00am to 10.30am led by Brother Samarakoon, and we could see there was a greater number of believers coming to the service and songs were being sung in both Tamil and Sinhala. Brother Gary shared the Word of God and the service ended with Communion.



Then we went to the worship service conducted by Brother Mahinda at a place called Maco. Pastor Jeyakanth shared the Word of God. After lunch, Brother Samarakoon bid us farewell and returned to Kekirawa while we went to the former church building where Brother Mahinda's sister cares for 4 elderly ladies and had discussions with them. They were being well looked after. We prayed for them then set off for Matale.

**HAPUTALE**



**MATALE AREA**

We saw the ministry done by Brother Rayappar, who conducts worship services in a rented building. He had gathered the believers for a prayer meeting during our visit. Brother Gary shared the Word of God then Pastor had discussions with the believers about their needs. Brothers Ranjithkumar, Gunaseelan and Michael were also there.

**BROTHER GUNASEELAN'S MINISTRY AT MATALE**

We left Brother Rayappar and went with Brother Gunaseelan to Kandy where he was doing his ministry. It was nighttime and foggy, but the believers were prepared for the prayer meeting under a tree. Brother Aryaretnuvam accompanied them. Brother Gunaseelan started the prayer meeting by singing a song then Pastor Jeyakanth shared the message of God regarding His power and might. We could directly sense the presence of God's glory. We went to Brother Michael's house where they had prepared an evening meal for us. We stayed the night.

*God made our trips possible in an amazing way. Glory be to God!*

# CHARITY COMMISSION INVESTIGATIONS

Supporters may have been concerned to hear that Care Sri Lanka has been contacted on two separate occasions recently by the Charity Commission for England and Wales (CC), wishing to investigate regulatory concerns following complaints they have received from members of the public.

Firstly, in February 2022 we were contacted in respect of 'regulatory concerns regarding the charity's oversight and monitoring of charitable funds which it has provided to its sister Charity LEFC (Lanka Evangelical Fellowship of Churches). This has, it has been alleged, potentially resulted in the misapplication of end funds contrary to the intended purpose of the charity and its beneficiaries.'

A number of areas were specified for review and trustees were required to provide a significant quantity of detailed information in response to the many questions and concerns put to us by the CC. Exchanges took place on a fortnightly basis until 4 May, when we received the encouraging news that the CC had considered our responses and the information provided and could confirm that, 'We acknowledge that the trustees have considered our enquiries and provided a full and detailed response to the issues raised with them. As such, the Commission at this time has no further questions relating to the issue previously raised.'

Although the identity of the complainant(s) is never revealed, we are fairly certain of the identity of the single complainant in this case. To receive such a response from the CC is not only a huge relief, but it is also confirmation that all necessary financial controls and accounting systems are in place and are operating correctly. This gives confirmation for our supporters that all donated funds are being applied correctly to ensure that money donated to the charity is used for the purposes for which it was given.

Then secondly, on 2 December 2022 we were contacted again by the CC, following 'the identification of a potential regulatory concern regarding the charity following concerns raised by members of the public'. The issue this time was primarily 'Safeguarding following allegations and incidents of sexual abuse in relation to individuals connected with the charity and its partner Lanka Evangelical Fellowship of Churches (LEFC)'

This was due to the child abuse case that occurred in Sri Lanka before the charity was established. We were then asked to provide a considerable amount of information in response to the 25 initial questions put to us in correspondence by the CC.

In order to secure a good working relationship with the CC, two of our

trustees, Gary Donaldson, and Richard Clarke, asked for a face-to-face meeting in Bootle, Liverpool. This was granted and the meeting went ahead on 23 April 2023. We spent just over three hours discussing many issues with our case worker and a senior safeguarding expert. In addition, we wanted to encourage the CC not to accept these vexatious allegations without evidence. This time the two individuals who had made the complaint to the CC have made themselves known to us.

Following further helpful discussion, an action plan has subsequently been agreed and we are currently reviewing and rewriting various policies and procedures to secure complete compliance. Although again time consuming, such an external review has proved most helpful to us.

A review of progress against the agreed action plan has been scheduled by the CC for December 2023.

*Brethren, pray for us.*

## Account Information

Sincere thanks to all who have continued to support the work of Care Sri Lanka and Lanka Evangelical Fellowship of Churches.

Bank Account Details:

Account Name: **Care Sri Lanka**

Account number: **76099024**, Sort code: **60-09-25**,

SWIFT: **NW BK GB 2L, NatWest Bank**

Account name: **Lanka Evangelical Fellowship of Churches**

*(no abbreviation please)*

Account number: **69062263**, Sort code: **30-98-97, Lloyds Bank**

Contact regarding both accounts: Gary Donaldson 0044 7535119106

Please **do not** make cheques payable to Lanka Link.

Care Sri Lanka is registered as a Charity, No. 1140552

**Mailing list, additional copies of the magazine and email news updates**

If you would like to be added to our mailing list or be sent additional copies please contact Gary Donaldson

by email: [admin@lankachurches.org](mailto:admin@lankachurches.org)

or by post to: Lanka Evangelical Fellowship of Churches,

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